



Assessment Findings and Suggestions Report

Springdale, Utah
May, 2016

ROGER BROOKS 
International



Opportunity Assessment

INTRODUCTION

In May of 2016, an Opportunity Assessment of Springdale, Utah, was conducted, and the findings were presented in a two-and-a-half hour workshop. The assessment provides an unbiased overview of Springdale - how it is seen by a visitor. It includes a review of local marketing efforts, signage, attractions, critical mass, retail mix, ease of getting around, customer service, visitor amenities such as parking and public restrooms, overall appeal, and the community's ability to attract overnight visitors.

In performing the Opportunity Assessment, we looked at the area through the eyes of a first-time visitor. No prior research was facilitated, and no community representatives were contacted except to set up the project. The town and surrounding area were "secretly shopped." Any person looking to relocate their business, industry, or residence will come to your community as a visitor first. Tourism is the front door to all your economic development efforts.

Once potential visitors find information about your area, are the marketing materials good enough to close the sale? In the Marketing Assessment, we reviewed your visitor website and print marketing materials.

A typical community has five opportunities to close the sale:

- 1) Personal contact (visitor information centers, trade shows, etc.)
- 2) Websites

3) Brochures and printed materials

4) Publicity (articles)

5) Word of mouth - the most effective means

We searched the internet for activities, requested and reviewed printed materials, and looked for articles and third-party information. As we prepared for travel to your community, we searched both commercial and organizational websites promoting the area, tourism websites, and read travel articles and guidebooks.

The marketing assessment determined how effective the marketing was in convincing a potential visitor that the area would be worth a special trip, a stop, or an overnight stay. The key to the marketing assessment is to see if you have a primary lure that makes you worth a special trip of a one-hour drive - or from further away. The question on most visitors' minds is: What do you have that I can't get closer to home? What makes you worth a special trip?

Where most communities falter is when they merely provide "lists" of what the community has, whether it's truly "unique" or not. Nearly every community in North America promotes the usual list of diversions: local museums, shops and restaurants, plenty of lodging, golf, outdoor recreation, historic downtowns, scenic vistas, etc. Of course, nearly every visitor can do these things closer to home. So, what makes Springdale worth the trip?

Always promote your primary lure first - what makes you worth that special trip. THEN, promote your diversionary, or "complementary" activities. Would you go to Anaheim, California, if Disneyland

wasn't there? Do you think that Universal Studios and Knotts Berry Farm mind that Disneyland gets all the glory? Of course not. Eighty percent of all tourism spending is with those secondary activities. Disney does the heavy lifting in terms of advertising and promotion, and the diversionary activities benefit.

In a nutshell, the Marketing Effectiveness Assessment looks for what makes your community worth a special trip, or a great place to live, or to do business. We look for details, details, details. Do you give a reason for visiting, and do you provide enough information to make it easy to plan a trip? Are the marketing materials good enough to close the sale?

The second part of the assessment process is the On-site Assessment. During this part of the assessment, we spent several days in the area, looking at enticements from the highways (signs, billboards, something that would get a visitor to stop), beautification and overall curb appeal, wayfinding (ease of getting around), visitor amenities (public restrooms, visitor information, parking), activities, overall appeal, retail mix (lodging, dining, shopping), critical mass, customer service, area attractions, pedestrian friendliness, gathering spaces, evening activities, and the availability of marketing materials and their effectiveness.

The area benefits from tourism when visitors spend money, and they do that in the local gift shops, restaurants, hotels, etc. Therefore, the On-site Assessment includes a candid look at private businesses as much as public spaces and amenities.

For every shortcoming or challenge we note during the assessment process, we provide a low-cost "suggestion," where possible, on how the challenge can be corrected or overcome. The suggestions are not termed "recommendations," as they were developed without consulting the community first about possible constraints, future plans, or reasons why the suggestions may not be appropriate. Hopefully this assessment process will open dialogue within the community, leading people to adopt some or all of the suggestions, taking them from suggestions to recommendations.

It's important to note that to increase the town's tourism industry, fulfilling one or two of the suggestions may have little impact, but implementing a number of them, if not all, can have a profoundly successful impact on the town's ability to tap into the tourism industry.

Implementation of these suggestions must be a region-wide effort, involving both privately owned businesses as well as local, county, and state agencies, where appropriate. Every local organization plays a role in tourism, downtown revitalization, or economic development efforts. A Destination Marketing Organization (DMO, CVB, Chamber, TPA, etc.) will not be successful if the tourism effort is not region-wide.

In many cases, issues may come up that you are already aware of and are already working on. In that case, the assessment validates those efforts. But more often than not, the assessment will point out things that you are aware of but can't mention or bring up without paying a political price. Local politics can be a killer of the tourism industry.



While marketing efforts are important, product development is the most important factor of a successful tourism industry. Visitors want activities, not just things to look at. How much time can a visitor spend enjoying activities - that cater to their interests - in your area? Does your community have truly unique attractions the visitor can't get closer to home? You must be able to deliver on your marketing promises – otherwise visitors might come once, but they won't come back. It's much more cost effective to bring people back, than to always go out and entice new visitors into town. "Been there, done that" communities eventually run out of visitors and find they don't have a sustainable tourism industry, or they simply become pit stops or gateways on the way to somewhere else.

After spending several days reviewing marketing materials and assessing the community, we have looked at all of these issues, and have developed some suggestions and ideas the community can discuss and possibly implement to help increase tourism spending locally.

SUCCESSFUL TOURISM TRANSLATES TO CASH

Tourism is successful when the community imports more cash than it exports. When residents spend their hard-earned money outside the community, the community is exporting cash – often referred to as "leakage." Tourism helps fill that gap, importing cash into the local economy without the necessity of having to provide extended social and other services. Visitors come, spend money, then go home. When you import more cash than you export, you have a positive "balance of trade." Communities with successful tourism

programs easily see that the industry subsidizes the community, whereas other communities find that they subsidize visitors – providing services visitors use without them leaving enough money behind to cover the cost of those services.

The primary goal of the tourism industry is to bring more cash into the local economy. This doesn't happen when visitors come into the community, get out of their cars, and take photographs. And it doesn't happen when visitors go swimming in the lake at your park all day, sunning, and eating the lunch they brought from home. And it doesn't happen when visitors hike down your trails, enjoy your interpretive centers, or stroll through your lovely arboretums. These are all great things to do, and, of course, you do want your visitors to do these – but, you also want to entice them into your shops, your cafes, espresso stands, restaurants, galleries, B&B's, and hotels, ultimately opening their wallets to make purchases. That is what helps your local economy, your small merchants, your hoteliers, and your tax coffers.

To entice visitors to spend money in your community, you need to have places for them to spend it – you need to have the right mix of shops, restaurants, entertainment, and lodging facilities, all in an attractive setting, as well as attractions that make them want to visit you in the first place.



THE THREE TYPES OF TOURISM

1. Visiting friends and family

The number one reason people travel is to visit friends and/or family. If you did nothing to promote tourism, you would still have tourism in your community. However, when friends and family come to visit, do your residents take them out to eat, shop, dine locally? Or do they head to a neighboring community? Do your locals even know what you have to offer? An effective tourism marketing effort also includes educating locals as to what you have and how to find it through effective wayfinding signage, gateways and advertising.

2. Business travel

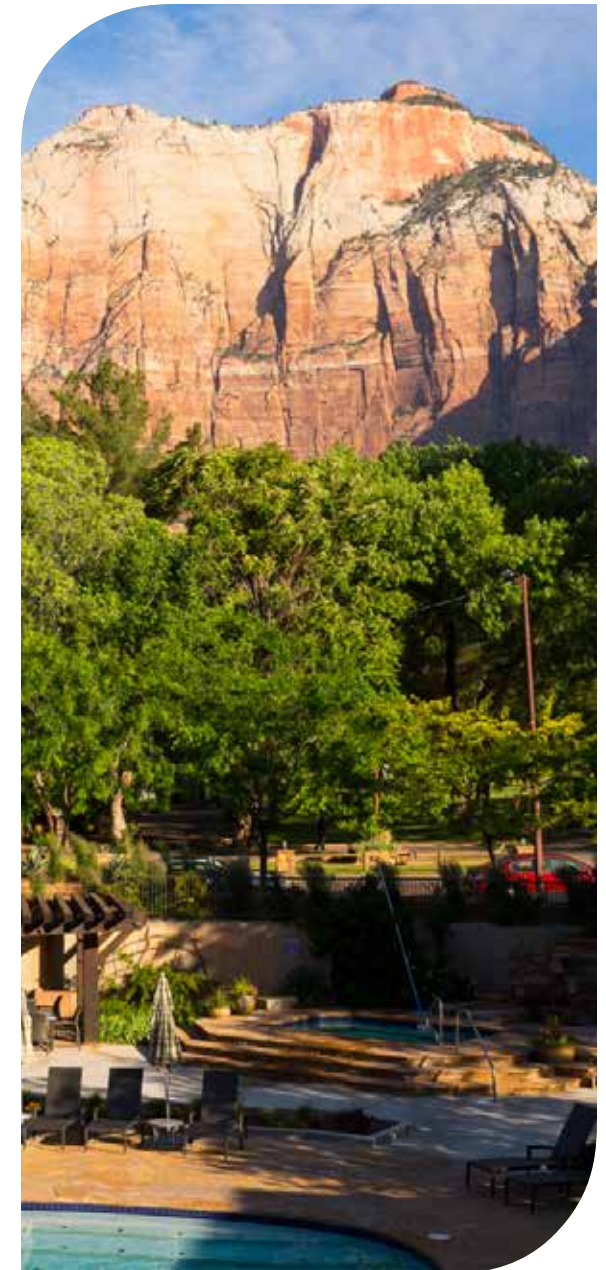
The second most popular reason for travel is business. Included in this category is educational travel: colleges and universities, as well as conventions and meetings, corporate travel, vendor travel, etc. Like leisure travelers, this group is looking for things to do “after hours” while in the area. The most successful convention and trade show towns are the result of their secondary activities or “diversions,” not simply because of their convention and exhibition facilities. Think Disneyworld, Disneyland, San Antonio’s River Walk, Banff, to name a few.

3. Leisure travel

The third, and most lucrative of all types of visitors, is the leisure traveler. They have no personal connections to the community, but are coming purely to enjoy themselves. They stay in commercial lodging establishments, eat virtually all their meals in local restaurants, and their top diversionary

activity is shopping and dining in a pedestrian-friendly setting.

The average leisure visitor is active 14 hours a day, yet typically only spends four to six hours with the primary lure. They then spend eight to ten hours with diversionary activities - things they could do closer to home, but will do while in the area. A good example of this is Branson, Missouri, the “live music-theater capital of the world.” This town of 6,500 residents hosts 7.5 million visitors a year. The primary “lure” is the 49 music theaters. The average visitor attends two shows a day over about





four hours. During the other hours of the day, the visitor will shop in local outlet malls, head to the water parks, theme parks, and other attractions, play a round of golf, hike, bike, fish, do some bird watching, and participate in any number of other activities they could do closer to home, but will do while visiting Branson.

THE THREE STAGES OF TOURISM

1. Status quo

If you take no action to develop the tourism industry, you will still have an element of tourism, simply because some travelers will pull off local highways or freeways for gas, food, or lodging, as well as the fact that the number one reason for travel is to visit friends or family. If you have residents, you will have some tourism.

2. Getting people to stop

The first priority of developing a successful tourism industry is getting people to stop. Imagine how successful businesses in the community would be if just 50% of the vehicles traveling through pulled off the highway and spent just 30 minutes in your community – buying gas, an ice cream cone, a sandwich, a gift or souvenir?

If there's a strong pull, imagine the money spent if visitors stayed two hours in the community, which nearly always translates to additional spending.

The first goal is to get those travelers to stop.

3. Becoming the destination

To become a destination community you must have attractions and supporting amenities that convince visitors to spend the night. And those attractions

must be different from what the visitor can get closer to home.

Overnight visitors spend three times that of day visitors, and nearly ten times that of visitors using your community as a pit stop on the way to somewhere else.

THE FOUR-TIMES RULE

Visitors will make a point of stopping or staying in a community if it has enough activities that appeal specifically to them and will keep them busy four times longer than it took them to get there.

In other words, if a person has to drive 15 minutes to visit you, do you have enough for them to do to keep them busy for an hour? (4 times 15 minutes) If a visitor has to drive an hour, do you have the activities and amenities to keep them busy for four hours?

The more you have to offer, collectively, the further visitors will come, and the longer they will stay, and of course, the more they will spend. This is why it is so important for communities to market more than just their immediate geographic areas. By marketing neighboring activities and attractions, you present much more for a visitor to do, and you make the visit worth the trip.

Visitors don't care about city limits or county lines – so market the broader package and you'll be able to keep people in the area long enough to translate to another meal, some more shopping, and hopefully, an overnight stay.

SELL THE EXPERIENCE, NOT GEOGRAPHY

Nearly every destination marketing organization is charged with promoting a geographic area, yet visitors couldn't care less about those boundaries. They are looking for activities that cater to their interests, and location is second to the experience. ALWAYS promote the primary lure first, then the location. People by the millions head to Disneyland, Disneyworld, Dollywood and other attractions. They are not going to Anaheim, Orlando or Pigeon Forge.

Always sell the activity - the experience - THEN the location.

LURES, DIVERSIONS AND AMBIANCE

Too often communities promote the list of diversions that nearly every community has. The primary lure is the activity that a visitor can't find closer to home.

Always promote your primary lure, then the diversions. Do not try to be all things to all people. Have you ever gone anywhere because they had "something for everyone?" Of course not - you go there because they have something specific for you. Find your niche and promote it like crazy.

Historic downtowns provide ambiance - they are not attractions, diversions, nor are they a primary lure. It's what's in the buildings that makes a downtown a destination.

The same can be said for scenery. Unless your vista is a world-class scene, such as Niagara Falls or the Grand Canyon, scenic vistas create wonderful ambiance, but don't translate to spending, and they only last a few minutes. Then what?

All too often communities promote their heritage as a primary draw. How far would you travel to visit a mining museum? A timber museum? An agricultural center? A county historical museum? Heritage must be outstanding and pervasive throughout the community to be a primary lure, such as Plimoth Plantation or Salem, Massachusetts.

Thousands of communities are the "capital" of something. For instance, in California, Borrego Springs is the grapefruit capital of the world. Gilroy is the garlic capital. Modesto is the tomato capital. Gridley is the kiwi capital. Oxnard is the strawberry capital. Fallbrook is the avocado capital. But here's the question: Have you ever gone anywhere because it was the capital of a fruit or vegetable?

Your local heritage is important to the community and can set the ambiance, even becoming a diversionary activity. For local heritage to be a major attraction, it needs to combine activities with ambiance, and it needs to be pervasive throughout the area.

BE DIFFERENT OR THE BEST

Why should a visitor come to your community if they can enjoy the same activities closer to home? Too many communities promote "outdoor recreation" as their primary draw. Unfortunately, that is the same attraction promoted by nearly every community in North America.

If you are different, then you have a reason for travelers to choose to visit you. If you are the best, then visitors will generally flock to your doors.

If you have great hiking trails, then market their unique qualities. Be specific and paint the image





of how wonderful they are in the minds of your potential visitors. If you have one fantastic restaurant in town, let people know about it – a unique dining experience is something many people will travel far to enjoy.

Ashland, Oregon, previously a depressed timber town, began its Shakespeare Festival, which now runs nine months of the year and draws hundreds of thousands of visitors who spend an average of six nights in the community. The Shakespeare Festival made Ashland different from any other community.

Leavenworth, Washington, another dying timber town, adopted a Bavarian architectural theme and produces dozens of Bavarian events every year. Some now say the town looks more genuinely Bavarian than towns in Bavaria. It is now one of the primary tourist destinations in Washington state, hosting more than 2.5 million visitors annually. They offer a different experience, an experience that is pervasive throughout town.

Okanogan County, Washington is an outdoor recreational paradise – just like 37 of the 38 other counties in Washington. So why go to the Okanogan? Because they are the best. They researched guidebooks, newspaper and magazine articles, and pulled quotes they could use in their advertising efforts. Like, “Pinch yourself, you’re in Okanogan Country with perhaps the best cross country skiing on the continent.” This, and other quotes like it, make it worth the drive to visit Okanogan Country. The third-party endorsements show that they are the best.

Set yourself apart from everyone else, and you’ll see that by being unique, you’ll be a greater attraction.

CRITICAL MASS MEANS CASH

Although it may not be the primary reason why visitors come to your community, shopping and dining in a pedestrian setting is the number one activity of visitors. Besides lodging, it is also how visitors spend the most amount of money.

Do you have a pedestrian-friendly shopping district? If not, can you create one? Many communities have been highly successful with the development of a two or three block long pedestrian “village” including visitor-oriented retail shops, dining, visitor information, restrooms, etc., all in an attractive, landscaped setting.

The general rule of thumb in those two or three blocks (not spread out all over town) is 10+10+10: Ten destination retail shops, which includes galleries, antiques, collectibles, home accents and furnishings, artists in action, book stores, logo gear (clothing), souvenirs, outfitters, tour operators, activity shops such as kites, jewelry, wine or tobacco shops, and other specialties. The second ten is for food: ice cream, fudge and candy stores, soda fountains, sit-down dining, coffee shops, cafes, bistros, delis, etc. And the final ten are businesses open after 6:00 pm. This includes entertainment: bars, dance clubs, theaters (movies and performing arts), retail shops with activities (piano bar in a wine shop), etc.

The important point is to group these businesses together to create the “critical mass” in a pedestrian-friendly setting. This will attract visitors as well as locals, and make it worth their while to stop and shop. People are always drawn to the critical mass –

the opportunity to have multiple choices, multiple experiences, all in a convenient and attractive setting.

TOURISM IS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

The goal of successful tourism is for people to come into the community, spend money, and go home. Tourism is nearly a \$947 billion dollar industry in the U.S., nearly \$82 billion in Canada, and supports millions of jobs. Ninety percent of tourism industry businesses are small businesses of which 90% have less than 15 employees. Tourism provides the opportunity for entrepreneurs to get started, for small family-run businesses to thrive, for artisans and craftspeople to find a market, and creates a basis for unique niche-retail environment including wineries, artists, crafts, etc. Tourism provides a diverse market within the community, expanding its potential. Enhancing the community through beautification efforts creates an attractive setting for both locals and visitors, key in revitalizing a community's downtown. And a tourism-friendly town will attract non-tourism industries faster than others – new businesses will see the community as a visitor before they make a final determination about the community. Tourism is the front door to your economic development efforts.

The benefits of a healthy tourism industry can rejuvenate a town, foster community pride, encourage economic diversity, and lead the way to a vital, successful community.



NEXT STEPS

The findings and suggestions in this report will provide many ideas, strategies, and goals to reach for. We hope that it fosters dialogue and becomes a springboard for the community in enhancing the tourism industry and other economic development efforts, leading to greater prosperity, rejuvenation, and enjoyment by all the citizens.

This report offers a first step in reaching that goal. To fully realize the benefits of this assessment, the community should take these findings and suggestions, discuss and evaluate them, and develop a plan for implementation.

A detailed branding plan would help to build on the results of this assessment, adding in-depth research, evaluation, and local input to develop a unique brand and implementation program. The assessment process essentially provides a look at where you are today. RBI's BrandCamp program helps build your branding plan from the ground up - with local input, brainstorming, research, and creative planning. We can work with you to guide you through the process, helping create a plan that has local champions and community buy-in.

The next step in the planning process would be to provide public outreach and review past and current planning efforts. This would determine your goals as a region.

The third step would involve research, feasibility and market analysis, and determining your brand - what you are or hope to be known for.

Then comes the "development" portion of the plan or the "how to get there" program: determining

what product development initiatives need to be undertaken to reinforce and grow the brand. This also includes defining the roles of the various local organizations. Brand-building takes a village - everyone pulling in the same direction, each with their own "to do list."

Finally, there's the detailed marketing plan: how and when you will tell the world who you are and what makes you special - the place to live, work and play.

The branding plan should be an "action plan" as opposed to a "strategic plan." You want a to do list, by organization, not just general strategies, goals and objectives.

The recommendations should provide all the necessary steps for your town to be successful in attaining its goals of a more diverse economy with an enhanced tourism industry and to become more attractive and enjoyable for both visitors and citizens.

A good plan will provide a program to get local residents and the business community pulling together, building the town's unique image in the minds of visitors and residents alike. The result of your efforts will be a prosperous, enjoyable environment in which to live, work, and visit.





Findings & Suggestions

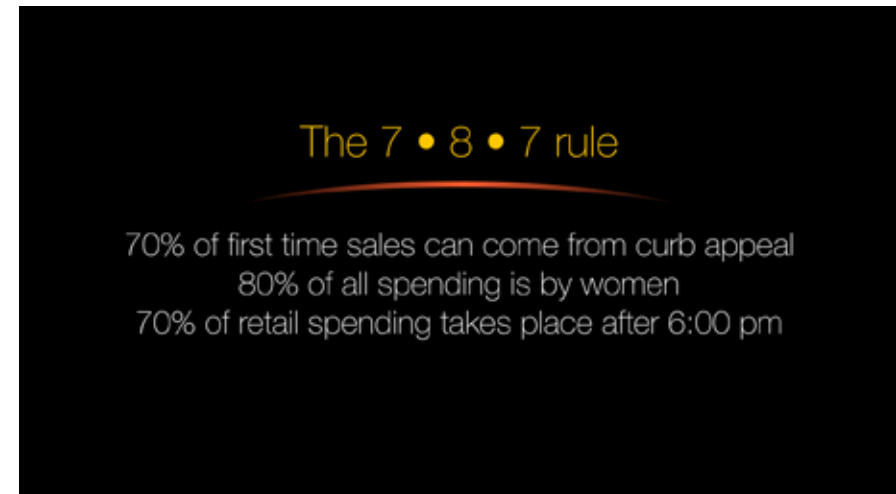
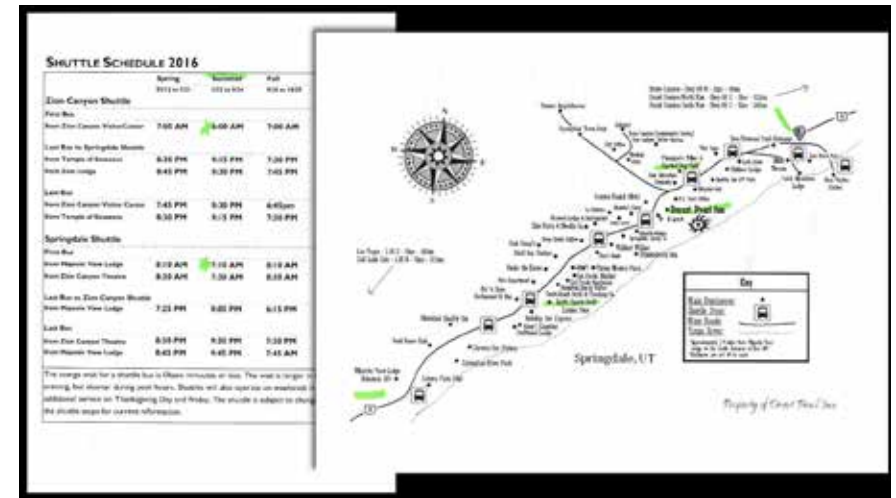


Our assessment process included reviewing Springdale's marketing materials, plus looking at your online presence, reviews on TripAdvisor and other information sites, as well as performing the "secret-shopping" on-site assessment. We spent over a week in Springdale, looking at signage and wayfinding (how easy was it to find your attractions and amenities?), appeal, critical mass (were there places in the county to spend money?), your attractions, amenities, customer service, and more.

This wasn't our first trip to Springdale and Zion National Park, though. We had seen an ad on television about the Mighty Five in Utah, and it made us really want to visit. That ad campaign is the most successful tourism campaign in the

U.S. So in the summer of 2014, we took a road trip, and we spent some time exploring some of Utah. We came to Springdale, took the Zion Park shuttle buses (top right), and hiked some of the trails, plus we had lunch at Amigo's (bottom left). We enjoyed our time in Springdale, but when we were asked to do the assessment here, it didn't register that Springdale was the town we had already seen once.

We arrived early Monday and stayed at the Desert Pearl Inn (bottom right). We wanted to stay at a non-chain hotel, so we looked at TripAdvisor for customer input. TripAdvisor is the most used tourism website there is.



Desert Pearl Inn had great reviews, it was within our budget, and there was availability. Customer service was excellent. When we checked in, we asked where was a good place to eat. The front desk clerk pulled out this list (top left). At first I thought, "Uh oh. She's just going to hand us a list." When visitors are just given a list of all the restaurants, it's not helpful. We need to know what's good. But she showed us some of her personal favorites, and that was perfect. This list is very well done, because it gives a lot of information about each restaurant. But remember to add the area code to phone numbers. Visitors rarely know what it is.

She also gave us a map and schedule for the shuttle bus (top right). She told us all about how it operates and where to catch it, so that it would be easy for us. Excellent. Very often visitors don't use the public transportation because they don't know how it works.

We ate dinner at 9 East, and it was great (bottom left).

When we first come into a town, there are three things we keep in mind: 70% of first time sales come from curb appeal; 80% of all spending is by women; and 70% of retail spending takes place after 6:00 pm.

Great curb appeal!



Within two hours we decided: We LOVE this little town!



Hospitality

The businesses & front-line employees in Springdale are among the very, very best we have **EVER** experienced.



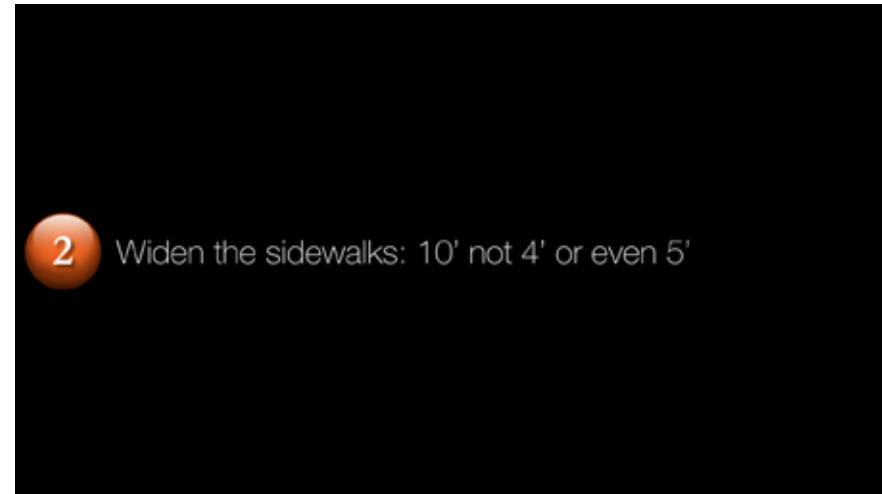
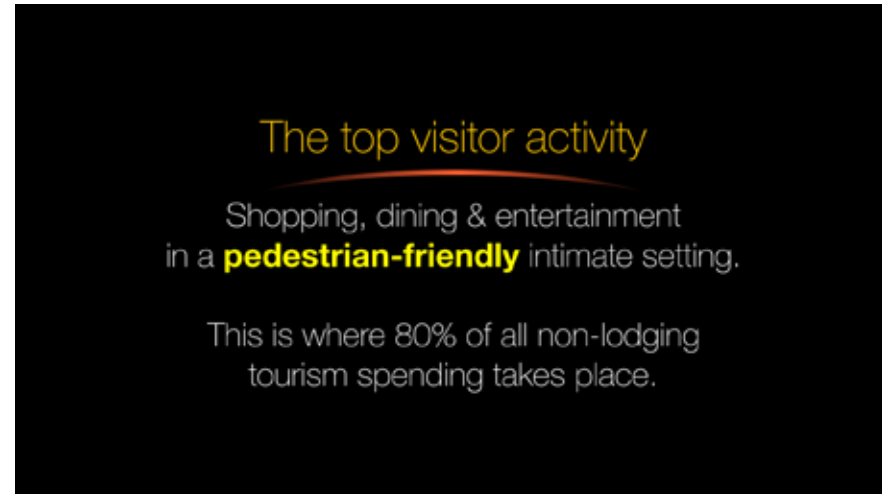
Many small towns don't have shops that are open after 6:00 (or even 5:00), so we were very surprised when we saw that most Springdale shops were open after 6:00. We were also impressed by the effort that merchants put into making their shops and restaurants look beautiful and inviting (top left and right, and bottom right). Great curb appeal!



Curb appeal can account for up to **70% of first-time sales** at restaurants, golf courses, wineries, retail shops and lodging facilities. And Springdale merchants are doing a fantastic job!

Women, who account for 80% of retail sales, like to spend time in beautiful spaces that feel safe. Good curb appeal makes places feel safe, comfortable, and inviting. It shows that people care about their community.

As we went into different shops and talked with various merchants, we weren't in town for more than three hours before we had heard that they were struggling with the success. There were so many visitors that they felt the town couldn't really handle them all.



Many local merchants were concerned about being “overrun,” and that they “can’t handle the influx” of visitors. They were concerned about the visitor having a negative experience because of the large crowds. And they were afraid Springdale would “lose its soul” - the spirit of the small-town community.

Springdale has challenges most other towns don’t: First, your biggest attraction is a major National Park, and it’s right outside your gates. Second, your main street is a state highway, so you don’t have a lot of local control over it. We would like to see Springdale have better control over its own destiny and be able to see a real return on the tourism dollars that are spent here. We’d also like to come up with ideas to help Springdale preserve what you hold so dear

about your community.

Springdale has so much going for it already. Your front-line staff people are nearly always excellent, and your architectural standards, beautification, and maintenance make Springdale a great place to live, have a business, and visit.

So, how can you make it better? The top visitor activity in the world is shopping, dining and entertainment in a **pedestrian-friendly** intimate setting. Springdale is one of the least pedestrian-friendly small towns we’ve worked in.

Start by widening the sidewalks. They should be 10 feet wide - not 4 feet.



The average person needs at least 2.5 feet on a sidewalk. That means for two people walking side-by-side, they need 5 feet to 6 feet. Yours are 4 feet wide.

This is important because the average visitor is active about 14 hours a day, and they usually spend only 4 to 6 hours on the primary activity they came for (like hiking). They spend the rest of the time (about 8 to 10 hours) doing other things. And the primary thing visitors will do is shop and dine in a pedestrian-friendly setting.

The 4 feet sidewalks in Springdale make it very difficult for visitors to walk around comfortably. Widen them! You'll make visitors want to get out of their cars and walk, and that will ease the congestion through town.



Think about the people who need to use the streets and sidewalks - don't just think about the storm drains and concrete. To reduce traffic congestion and make Springdale be friendly for **people**, you need 10 feet wide sidewalks, and next to them, you need bike lanes (top left). We saw many people trying to ride their bikes through town - trying to ride on the sidewalks without hitting a pedestrian, or trying to ride in the street with all the cars. Adding bike lanes through town will make it much safer and easier, and that'll help get even more people out of their cars.

There's enough room to fit 10 feet sidewalks plus bike lanes, as you can see

here (bottom left and right).

A lot of the sidewalks are in poor shape right now, too (top right).

People want to be able to get out of their cars and walk. Make it easy for them.



Right now, this store (top left) has no space to put any outdoor benches or pots on the sidewalk. It's just too narrow, and the huge moat forms a barrier on the street side. You want merchants to be able to put outdoor displays and beautification on the sidewalks next to the buildings - it makes downtown more attractive and promotes visitor spending.

Why wasn't this new sidewalk built out to the street (top right)? It doesn't make sense to have this dirt strip between the sidewalk and the street.

Continue sidewalks all the way to the park entrance (bottom left). Make it easy for people to get out of their cars and walk.

Likewise, extend the sidewalks around corners so that they make a continuous place for people to walk (bottom right). Why was this sidewalk cut off here? Are people just supposed to disappear once they reach this point? Of course, they need to keep walking.



This should be priority #1. This is awful. Really awful.



...and cars in the moat.



Here, the sidewalks have completely disappeared (top left). To get people out of their cars and walking, you need to make it easy, safe, and convenient. Extend your sidewalks, and make them wide enough for practicality.

The moats all along the boulevard make downtown very difficult and dangerous to walk through. Get rid of them. We heard that they can't be removed or covered because they are historic, but that is hardly a reason to cripple downtown. Saving historic structures is a good goal, but not when the historic structures are causing problems for living people. Springdale is a town for the people alive today. We heard about a visitor who broke her ankle last

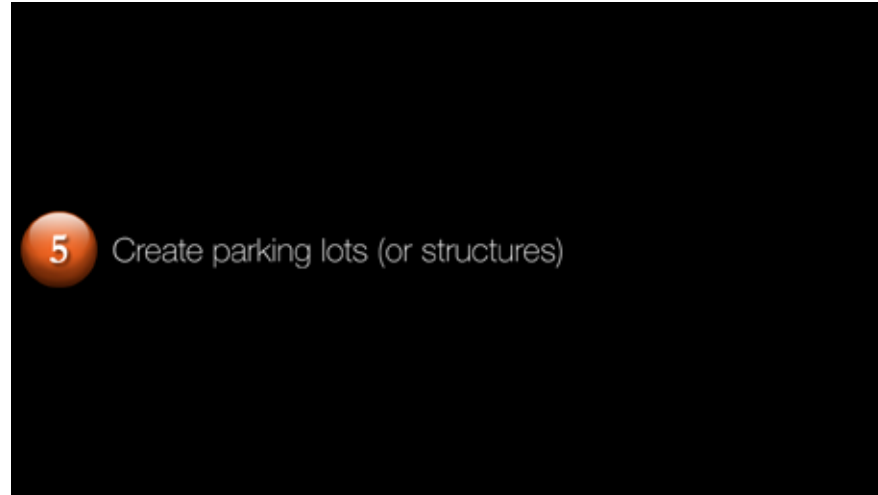
year when she fell into one of the moats. They make it hard for people to walk and cross the streets, and they make it hard for people to park and get out of their cars.



Do you want people to have a good experience in Springdale? Do you want them to be able to get out of their cars? The ditches are a major impediment to that - they are hazardous, and they are an eyesore. Moats were originally built to keep enemies out - so why do you want to set up moats to keep your customers out? Springdale is a beautiful town in an incredibly scenic location, but the moats running through town are ugly.

We understand that they are a reminder of Springdale's past, but there are other ways to preserve the history of the town than to keep dangerous

infrastructure in place. History isn't one point in time - we are creating new history, and new legacies, every day.



In order to retain the history of the moats, they could be recreated in a park as a display, using the original stones from the ditches. You can still keep your small-town character without the moats - you can keep the highway two lanes wide, but eliminating the moats will give you space to have wider sidewalks and bicycle lanes. These will make downtown so much more pedestrian friendly, decreasing the volume of traffic.

Another suggestion is to build a parking structure. Parking is a problem in town. We discovered this parking lot (bottom left), but it is hardly used. We've only seen two to eight cars ever parked in this lot, while visitors are filling the boulevard. Part of the problem is that the signs to the public parking lot are

too small to be seen easily, and part of the problem is that people have to walk farther and cross the busy boulevard to reach a shuttle stop. We suggest you have the shuttle bus drive to the parking lot and pick up people there.

For a community like Springdale, we usually wouldn't suggest parking garages, but we think the volume demands it. You could build them on the same street as the parking lot (bottom left) - they don't need to be right on the boulevard. Build parking garages that fit the architecture and ambiance of Springdale. For example, Santa Fe has parking garages that fit right in with the town (bottom right).



Another example of a parking garage in downtown Santa Fe (top left).

Be sure to have your shuttle buses make stops at the parking garages. We suggest having another parking structure somewhere in the mid-town area as well (top right). They don't need to be right on the boulevard - they can be located up to two blocks away.

Make sure you place easy to see signs to let visitors know where to find the parking.

Providing these garages with shuttle service and good signage will probably reduce your traffic through town by as much as 30%.

Even parking lots can look nice. Take a look at this example of a nicely landscaped lot (bottom left and right).

6 Add bike lanes, move the parking **OFF** Zion Park Blvd.

7 Rent bikes with baskets.



After you have the parking structures, the wider sidewalks and bike lanes, we suggest you remove any parking from Zion Park Blvd. The greatest reason to have on-street parking is to provide parking for customers who are shopping. But in Springdale, most of the people who park on the boulevard are not shopping - they park their cars, and they catch the shuttle to the park.

With no parking on the boulevard, there would be plenty of room for bike lanes. There are vendors in town who rent bikes, but they currently warn their customers about the dangers of riding a bike downtown. Rightfully! There are bike trails, but they aren't in town - you need to make it easy for people to ride

in town. Add bike racks throughout town as well.

You can provide bikes with baskets (bottom left) - baskets make it easy for people to shop!

We watched this couple trying to ride their bikes through town with their toddler in tow (bottom right), and they really struggled. It was hard for them to find room to ride that was safe and not blocked by moats. Part of the time they used the sidewalks, but that was challenging too, because of the pedestrians.



We couldn't figure out why parking was allowed on parts of Zion Park Boulevard, but not allowed on other parts. There are 103 on-street parking spaces between Zion Gallery and Lions Boulevard. It would be easy to make up for eliminating those spaces by building a parking garage or creating a large parking lot.

The average Wal-Mart shopper parks 140 feet from the entrance (top right). They have no problem walking from there to the back of the store to make a purchase. That's about two blocks. The point is that the walk has to be

worthwhile. With downtown Springdale, walking one or two blocks to shop is definitely worth it.

You have the space to create 10 feet wide sidewalks, 10 feet wide bike lanes, and two traffic lanes of 12 feet.

Suggestion: Add crosswalks every block on Zion Park Boulevard. We constantly saw people jaywalking (bottom right). They have no choice. Crosswalks are almost non-existent!



There are so few crosswalks across Zion Park Boulevard that people have no choice but to dash across the street wherever they can (top left), and traffic is usually so heavy that it can be a real challenge and a safety issue.

We only found a few crosswalks (top right), and they are not very noticeable for drivers. We suggest making your sidewalks decorative - so they are easy to see and attractive. Keep the ambiance of Springdale in mind, and make your sidewalks match the appearance of the town.

These crosswalks (bottom left and right) are not pavers - they are created using

a process called StreetPrint. It is embossed right into the existing asphalt using a special dye, so that it lasts twenty years. You can even do snow removal over it. You can have it done in any pattern, color and design. It's ideal for decorative crosswalks. When they are decorative, they are more noticeable, and safer for pedestrians. You need crosswalks every **block** through downtown.

10 While you're at it - put the power underground!



11 Develop a wayfinding system



We heard a rumor that Zion Park Boulevard is going to be redone through Springdale. While you are going through that process, we strongly suggest that you put the power lines underground. Springdale has incredible scenic beauty, but it is often spoiled by the power lines (top right).

We understand that the redesign of Zion Park Boulevard is still in process, and we suggest you contact UDOT and request that the redesign include: putting the power underground; removing the moats; creating 10 foot sidewalks; adding bike lanes (one side of the street would be fine for the bike lanes); and

putting in decorative sidewalks every block.

Suggestion: Develop a wayfinding system. Wayfinding is directional signs. We had the most problem with directional signs for parking. When you drive to the National Park, they have a sign posted that says their parking lot is full, and visitors need to park in town (bottom right). But where? It's so hard to find any parking in town except along Zion Blvd, and that is nearly always full.

Thanks a lot. Where?



12 "Follow signs to parking. Take the free shuttle."



13 This sign is FAR too small. Bring the shuttle TO the lot!



Walking north: End of the world is here.



Driving through the park in one direction, you see this sign (top left), which has a sign to flip down to let visitors know the parking lot is full. Heading to the park from the other direction, this sign (top right), stating that the parking lot is full, is permanent!

You need to add signage directing visitors to off-street parking, plus include that visitors can take the free shuttle from the parking lot to the park. Make it easy for visitors!

You do want your park visitors to park their cars in Springdale, because there is

a much higher likelihood of them spending money in town.

This sign (bottom left) for the Zion Shuttle Parking lot, is much too small. We drove past it several times without even noticing it. And bring the shuttle all the way to the parking lot. Again, make it easy!

Walking north towards the park, when you reach this point (bottom right), it looks like you've reached the end of town - the end of any shopping. But there's a lot more shopping further down the road. You need signs to let visitors know there's "Lots more shops ahead."



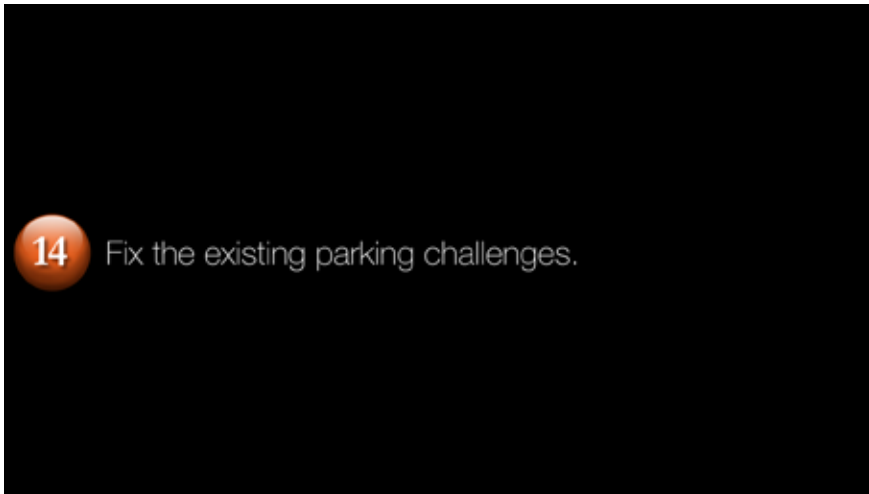
When you are walking and reach this point (top left), it looks like there is no more commercial - no more shops and restaurants - beyond this residential. There's a lot more, though. You can let visitors know through wayfinding signage: "More to explore - shops and restaurants ahead 500 ft."

Wayfinding includes:

- Gateways and entries
- Attractions and activities
- Amenities (parking, washrooms)

- Trail markers and access points
- Visitor information kiosks
- Pedestrian wayfinding in your downtown

The signage should be decorative to fit your ambiance and easy to read, such as these examples from Modesto, CA (top right), Woodlands, TX (bottom left), and Appleton, WI (bottom right). Appleton put up 18 of these signs, at a cost of about \$700 each, and their retail sales and services increased by about 20%.



A good wayfinding system includes pedestrian wayfinding as well as vehicular (top left).

Navigation systems are no substitutes for a good wayfinding system. Nav systems tell you how to find things that you already know about, but wayfinding systems can tell you about attractions, amenities, shops, etc., that you don't know about. They can educate your residents and front-line employees about what you have to offer, and how to find it.

Wayfinding is an investment, not an expense. It plays a role in your branding

and marketing efforts; reinforces a positive experience; increases spending; educates visitors and locals about what you have; builds community pride; and it is as much a science as an art.

The park does a good job with wayfinding (top right).

Work to get the state, county, NPS, and the town together and create a task force. Apply, collectively, for federal transportation grants to develop the wayfinding system.



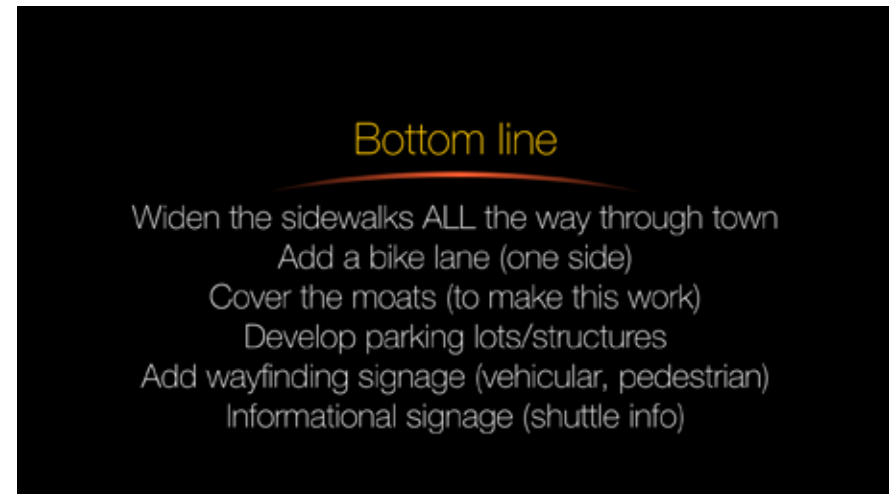
Way too much going on here. Also add visitor information.



If most of the areas are free, why should I pay? Be consistent!



Simply not used like it should be.



Bottom line

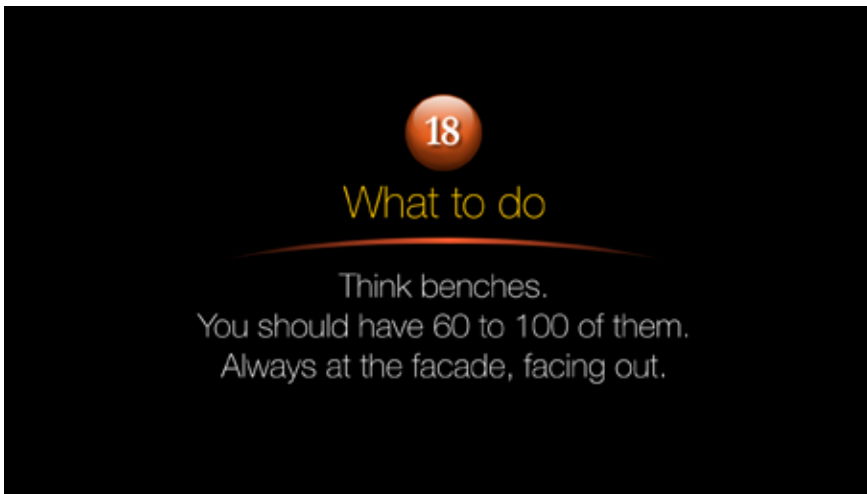
- Widen the sidewalks ALL the way through town
- Add a bike lane (one side)
- Cover the moats (to make this work)
- Develop parking lots/structures
- Add wayfinding signage (vehicular, pedestrian)
- Informational signage (shuttle info)

Fix the existing parking challenges throughout town. Parking needs to be convenient, consistent, easy to find, and easy to understand.

The shuttle parking lot at the north end of town is confusing and under-utilized. First of all, when you enter, you're greeted with 7 signs, a map, and two pay boxes. The charge is \$10, but across the street, and everywhere else in town, you can park for free. Plus you still have to walk a couple blocks to catch the shuttle. No wonder it's not used very much.

People are willing to pay for parking as long as it's convenient, consistent, reasonable, and easy to use.

If you take care of these suggestions (bottom right), you will see traffic congestion reduced, visitors having a much better experience, retail sales increase, and you'll be maintaining the integrity of the community. These street improvements can all be accomplished within the right-of-way you have now.



This was the only bike rack we saw in town (top left). Add about 20 of them. When you get rid of the street parking and include bike lanes along Zion Park Blvd, you'll definitely need more bike racks!

Women account for 80% of all spending. Take a look at the photo top right. Note the benches. Benches throughout downtown make it easy for people to spend a lot more time shopping. They can rest and take their time between visiting shops. They should always be at the building facades facing out towards the street. Think about a front porch at home with a bench or chairs

facing outwards. Even if no one sits there, those benches and chairs say welcome.

Suggestion: Build more low- to moderate-income housing for the Springdale workforce. From what we've seen and heard, most of the employees who work in Springdale don't live here. Likewise, most likely most of the goods sold in Springdale are originally purchased someplace else. And if many property owners live someplace else, the rents they receive are going out of town as well. When money earned in Springdale is spent outside town, that's leakage.



When there's a lot of "leakage," the town doesn't see the monetary benefit of sales and tourism that it should. One way to help keep the money in town is to provide enough residential space for the workers to actually live in town.

Look into providing low- to moderate-income housing specifically for workers. It can be done through a HUD program, where a developer builds the housing (top left and right), and sells it to, perhaps, the county for cost plus 15% for their profit. Then it is administered through the county, and rental rates are kept low. This is not housing for the unemployed, however - people have

to have a job to live there. If they lose their job, they have to move within a reasonable period of time.

Also consider finding workers through a university internship program. These internships can bring you workers from around the world who are studying hospitality, and they would be here for 6 to 12 months at a time. This was done in Whistler, BC (bottom left).

We walked to Oscar's for breakfast (bottom right), and it was great.



Sample criteria:

- Must be highly regarded (80%+ positive peer reviews, regional publications, TripAdvisor, Yelp, etc.)
- Must have good curb appeal
- Must be open year round
- Must be open until at least 6:00 pm
- Must be open six days a week (they can be closed on Mondays)
- Must be unique to the area (no chains, sorry)

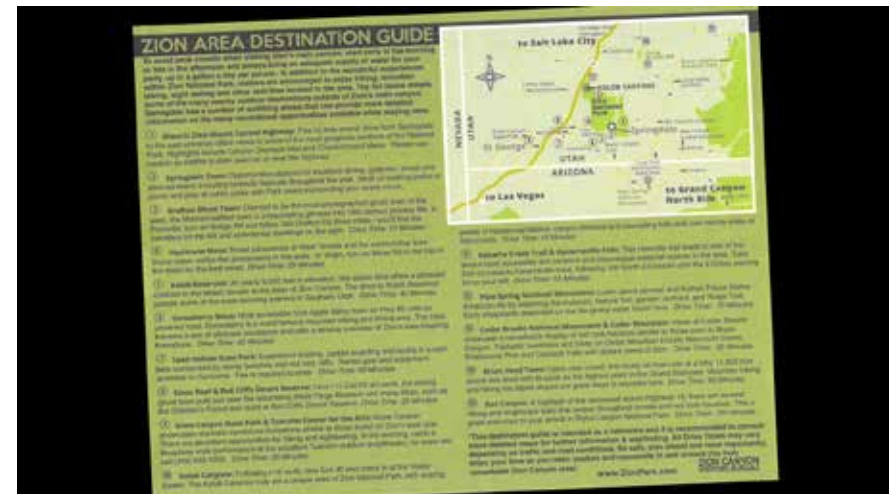
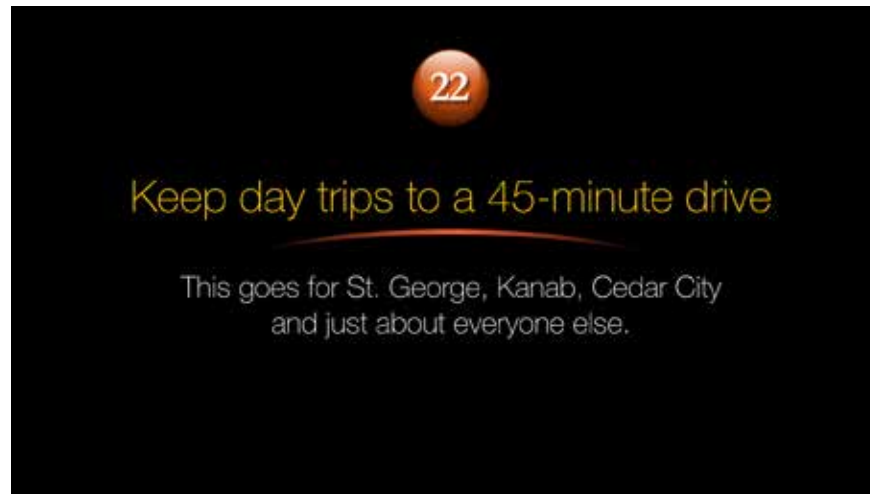
Create a "Best Of" guide - it can have a dramatic impact on visitor spending. Its purpose is to promote your "anchor tenants" - those businesses and attractions that your visitors can't find closer to home - those you would drive an hour or more to visit. This should be specifically about Springdale, and should include your very best restaurants, retail shops, and activities. No lodging - because you want your lodging facilities to hand the brochures out to all their guests.

It's important that the brochure NOT look like a bunch of ads. Use an advertorial format; include lots of photos with specific, descriptive text.

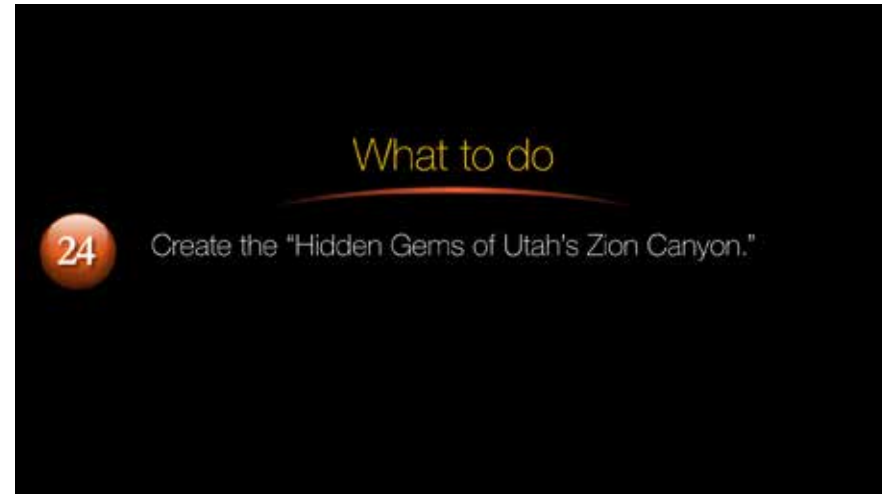
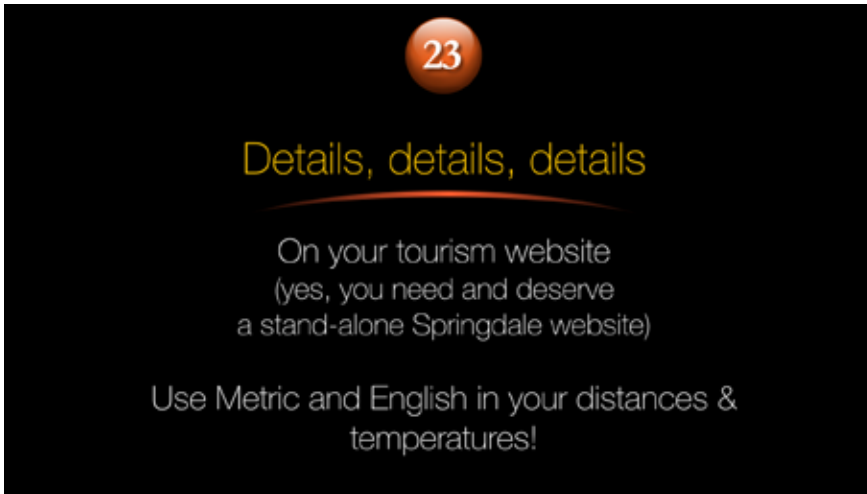
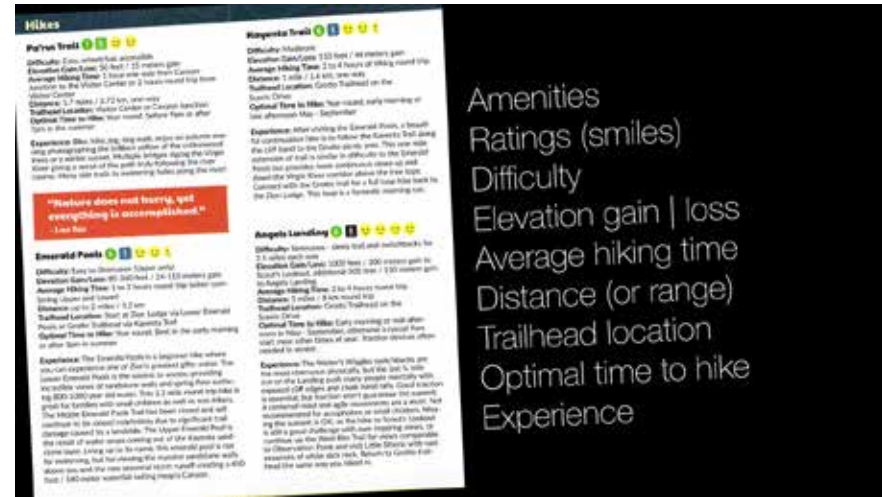
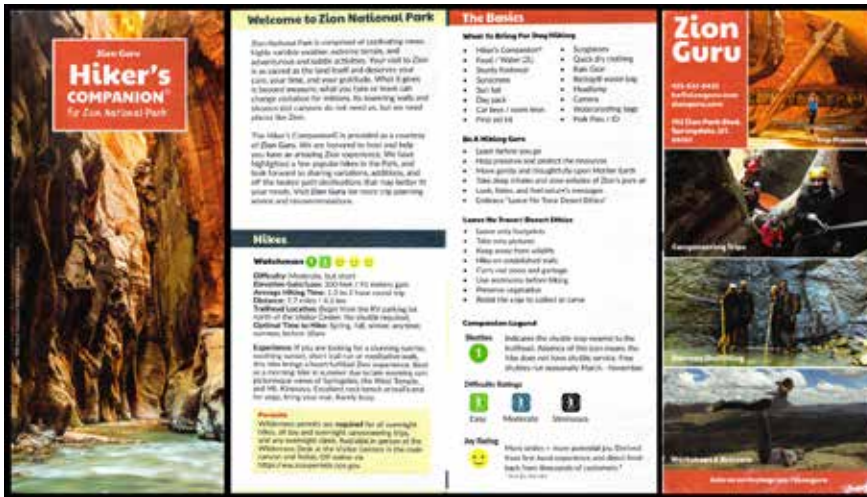
It's critical to establish criteria to select the very best that you have, such as:

- Must be highly regarded (80%+ positive peer reviews, regional publications)
- Must have good curb appeal
- Must be open June through October (to start)
- Must be open until at least 6:00 pm and be open six days a week
- Must be unique to your town (no chains)

The examples shown in the photos promote the best of Alpena, Michigan. Each business was invited to participate, and they paid \$400 per panel. Alpena mailed a copy to every household in town with a note to hold onto the brochure, and when friends and family come to visit, to use the brochure to show their guests the best that Alpena has to offer.



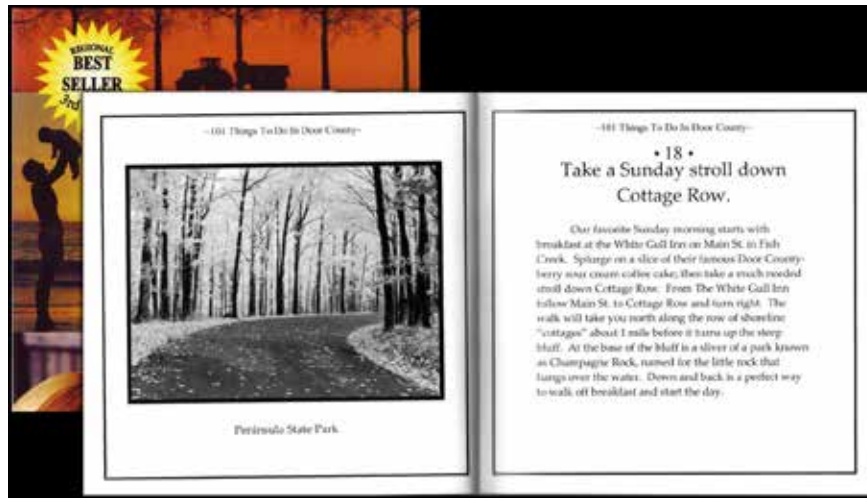
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One of the best brochures we have seen is this Hiker's Companion by Zion Guru (top right and left). It gives all the details a visitor needs, including nearby amenities, ratings, difficulty, elevation gain or loss, average hiking time, distance, trailhead, optimal time, and experience.

Visitors need details to plan their trip. Use your website to provide all the details you can. Springdale should have their own website - it is already a stand-alone destination.

We are big fans of WordPress websites, and there are other website platforms that are easy to use as well. These templates make it easy to build and maintain your own website, and there are many different layouts and designs to choose from. The important thing is to provide the details visitors need to plan their trips. We heard many people speaking French and German while we've been here in Springdale, so be sure to include metric in your distances and temperatures.



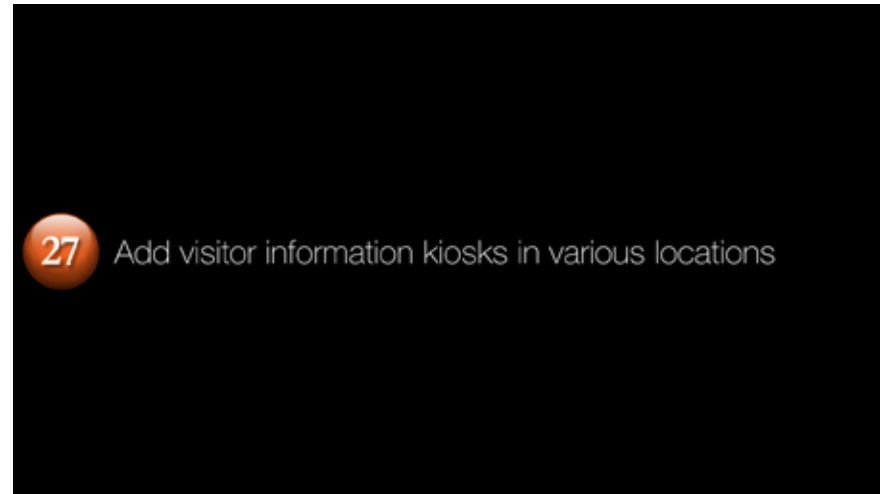
In addition to a "Best Of Springdale" guide, create a book about the "hidden gems" of the famous Zion Canyon. One of Door County, Wisconsin's most successful marketing pieces is a small book written by a private person called "101 Things to do in Door County" (top left). These are basically "hidden gems," and they are very specific, fun, mini-itineraries for things to do while visiting Door County. They aren't Door County's best attractions, they are things only locals would know about. They let visitors know about all the other fun things to do, besides your major attractions.

Your hidden gems are not the major attractions that would get us to travel to

Springdale, but while we're here, these are some fantastic little excursions and enjoyments we could have. These will get visitors to stay longer.

We drove down to Fort Zion to check it out, and then drove back. The gateway sign (top right) is very nice and is in a great location. We spotted the trail, but there was no signage telling us where or how far it went.

This pull-off (bottom right) would be an ideal location for a visitor information kiosk with information about the trail, the park, and Springdale.

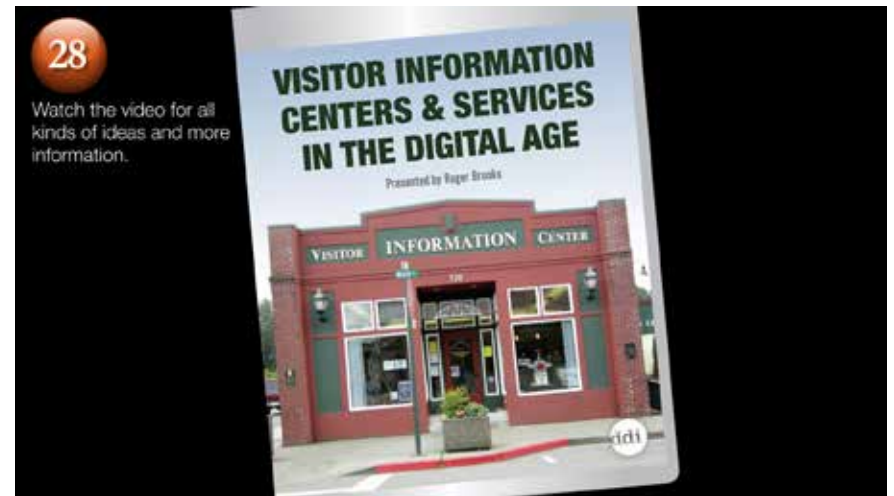


We saw these sign foundations (top left), and later learned that these are new and will have park information on them, which is great.

One important thing to provide visitors is brochure distribution - around the clock. It's good to have displays for visitors to look at, but it's also important to give them information they can take with them. Even with the internet, brochures are still important. Bentley University's Center for Marketing Technology found that prior to traveling, the number one way people make a decision about travel is from the internet; the number two method is from friends (word of mouth); and only 32% of travel decisions come from

brochures. But after the visitor is in the area, 81% of decisions about what to do are made as a result of brochures.

It's easy to provide access to brochures. You can simply add small brochure holders like these in Bruce County, Ontario (top right) and in Wickford, RI (bottom left).



Suggestion: Build information kiosks to have around town. This small kiosk in Moses Lake, Washington, (top left) provides information about not-to-be-missed attractions in the area. It was created by volunteers.

This visitor information kiosk (top right and bottom left) is a great example of a kiosk that fits the ambiance of the town. This includes brochure distribution (bottom right), and each business or attraction that displays their brochure pays \$5 each month, which covers the cost of restocking, maintenance, and a little more to go for building another kiosk.

Place visitor information all around town - make it easy for your visitors to learn what you have to offer and to cross-sell other attractions and amenities in the area. The more you have to offer, the longer people will stay, and the more money they will spend.

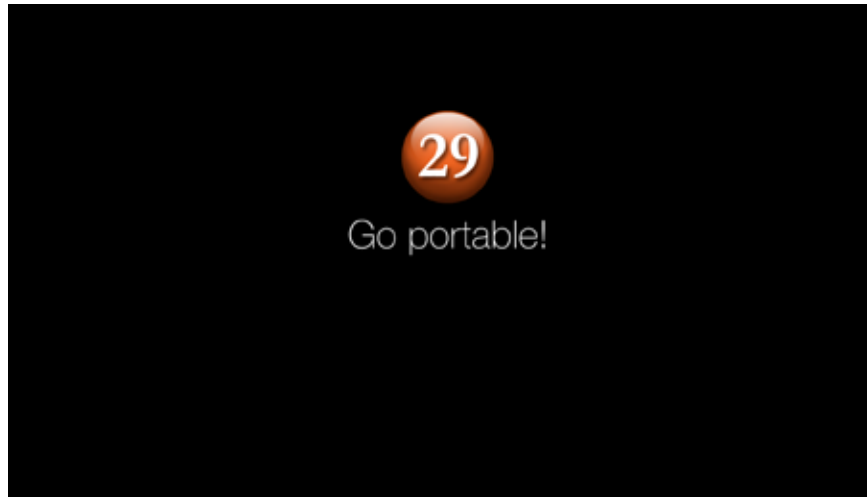
For more information, watch our video about visitor information centers in our online library.



One of our favorite places is Cape May, NJ (top left). They have created a very attractive, self-serve visitor information kiosk. We don't need technology here, just an old fashioned kiosk where you can pick up a printed brochure. Note the message at the top, "Welcome friends, old and new, linger here a day or two."

Flemington, NJ (top right) built some of these unmanned visitor kiosks. They are small enough to go almost anywhere, and they have maps and several brochures.

North Platte, Nebraska, built these weather-proof brochure holders for about \$300 (bottom left and right) to put right outside their visitor information center. These boxes can hold three different brochures of different sizes, and they enable their visitor information center to be working 24 hours every day.



Consider having a couple portable visitor kiosks that you can move around to different events or locations as the need arises. These portable kiosks (top right and bottom left and right) are used in Banff, Alberta. They are made from PVC pipe and fabric, so they are lightweight, inexpensive, and easy to move and store. They are made by Green Mountain Gazebo.

We suggest you have visitor kiosks at these locations:

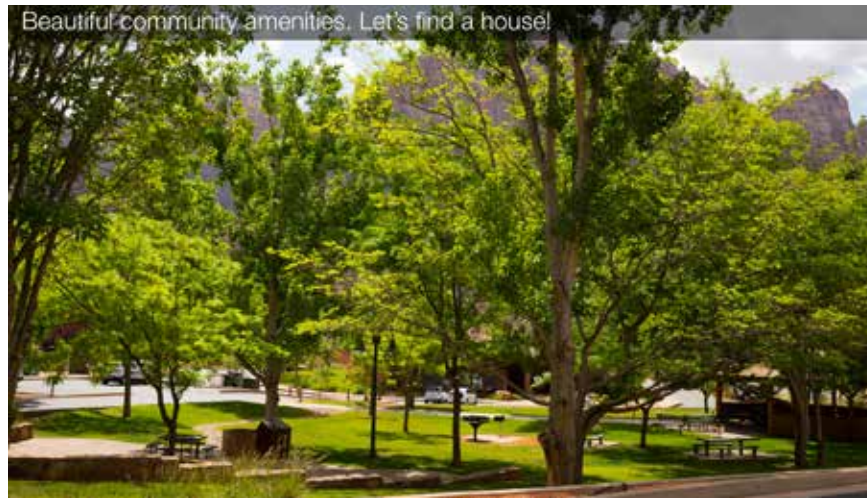
- At the national park entrance (by the bridge)

- At the south-of-town pull-off
- Two or three in the heart of town
- At or near the amphitheater
- At public parking areas



We went across the bridge over the river and saw several trails there (bottom left). We had no idea where they went or how long they were. Add some trail

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We saw the beautiful community park (top left). What gorgeous community amenities! And everywhere you look is picture-perfect.

We saw the sign for the amphitheater (top right), but there was no information about any upcoming events. We weren't sure if it was ever used. Put up a schedule so that people will know. It's a great invitation to visit again.

We drove into the park, and the line was 40 cars deep to get in. We already had a park pass, but we still had to wait in the same line. The next day we walked into the park (bottom left), and there was a gentleman allowing visitors to bypass the line of people buying passes if they already had one. The park

should do the same thing for vehicles.

When we drove into the parking lot, we circled around for about half an hour before we were able to even park in a 15-minute visitor information space (bottom right). And this is the weekend before Memorial Day! Really, 15 minutes isn't enough time to walk all the way to the center, stand in line, and get the information you need - it should be at least 20 minutes, and it needs to be enforced.

The staff was terrific. There was no information at all about Springdale, though, except for a list. Attractions should cross-promote.



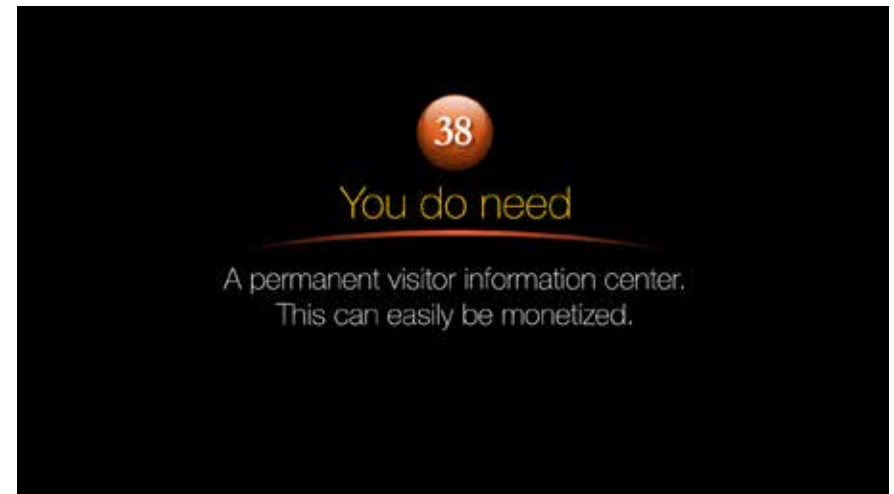
We spent the afternoon exploring downtown Springdale and its shops. We noticed Zion Guru (top left), and weren't sure what type of shop it was by the name. We noticed the tiny signs in the windows promoting outfitting and tours, etc., but we always recommend that businesses promote what it is they're selling first, then the name of the business.

For example, Lafave Gallery's sign (top right) has "Gallery" in the largest letters. It's easy to see at a glance that they are a gallery.

For Zion Canyon Offerings (bottom left), we suggest they put "Gifts, Jewelry

& Home Decor" in the largest letters, then the name of the store below that. Always promote the "lure" - what you sell - first, then the name of the store second.

Worthington Gallery (bottom right) is a great gallery, and the word "gallery" is very easy to read on their sign, so it's good.



We loved that this gallery (top left) has a sign right up front letting visitors know that they ship. It's a great way to increase sales. We only saw three businesses with that sign.

We're thinking about a "Very Best Of Springdale" list to help you get started with a "Best Of" brochure, and so far we would say that 9 East Restaurant, Oscar's Care for breakfast, and the Worthington Gallery should make it on the list. There will be more!

While walking downtown, we noticed this vacant gallery building, and we

wondered if it could be made into a temporary "pop-up" visitor information center. We don't know if there are already plans for the building (there are no "coming soon" signs). If not, the property owner may like the idea of having a temporary renter, who would vacate within 30 days if he finds a more permanent renter. Besides visitor information, it could provide downtown public restrooms, guide service displays, local art, Zion Park information, and an exterior visitor info kiosk. Downtown is the perfect location, because once people are out of their cars, they are four times more likely to spend money at nearby shops.



We parked our car and started using the shuttle (top left). It was convenient and easy. In your marketing, you should promote shuttle use. Let people know that when they visit Zion National Park and Springdale, they won't need their car. The free shuttle is easy and convenient. In the park, and in the town.

These ads (bottom left) are good, but they would be better if they said "Park in town. Ride free - in town and in the park." That way, visitors realize that they can get around inside the park without a car too.

Suggestion: At the top of these signs (bottom right), include the message: Always free. Every 10-15 minutes. In town, in the park.



We rode about six different shuttles. Most of the drivers didn't engage with the visitors at all. Our first driver didn't say a word, and the second would respond if asked a question. One driver did let the passengers know what they would find at the next stop, listing some of the shops or restaurants. On a whole, though, they were the least customer-service oriented people we found in Springdale.

Suggestion: Work with the drivers on customer service. Encourage them to make it fun and engage with their passengers. Only one out of seven drivers told people how to get into the park once they arrived at the stop. Visitors

were wandering around wondering where to go. There are signs, but they are easy to miss. The drivers need training on how to offer assistance and friendly information to their passengers.

Put up some of these signs (bottom left) in town. Springdale will benefit when visitors know they can see more of the park using the park shuttle, as well as the Springdale shuttle.

The next morning we had breakfast at Cafe Soleil, and it was great (bottom right). We're on foot and shuttle for the day, exploring the town.



We saw Zion Adventure Company (top left), thinking we might do a short overland tour. But they were short on drivers, so there weren't any tours offered that day.

We also saw this vehicle (top right) near the park, but we weren't sure where to go to find more information about tours and rides. There was a website address, but that's not very practical for visitors who are out looking for things to do. That's why you really need a visitor center with information about all the different tour and guide services available.

We took the shuttle in the park and walked on one of the trails, and it was gorgeous (bottom left). One thing to keep in mind for all the photography in your marketing materials, is to always include people. Yes, the scenery is beautiful, but when you add a person to the picture, it adds scale, dimension, and helps the viewers imagine themselves there. They evoke emotion, and smiles are contagious.



Some additional notes and observations:

This shop looks kind of boring (top left); add some murals or artwork, as well as pots and flowers, to dress it up.

Think of outside displays as extensions of your window displays. Avoid putting out racks of clothes and tables or boxes of merchandise. This shop (top right), which is great, has clothes racks outside - it gives you a second-rate destination appearance. If you wouldn't put racks of clothes in your window

as a display, don't put them outside either. By the way, whenever people were sitting outside eating ice cream, it attracted more customers into the store for ice cream too. Great for sales!

Extend window displays out to exterior spaces. Besides promoting what you sell, this adds beautification and makes your shop welcoming. This shop owner (bottom left) sets up this display every morning. This shop owner (bottom right) also sets up a beautiful display every morning, and she says that it saved her business by attracting more customers.



This restaurant in Banff, Alberta (top left) makes their menu board decorative to entice customers inside.

Merchants should use the outdoors as a place for “window displays” of their merchandise, attractively arranged, as these shop owners did in Canmore, AB (top right). This shop in Canmore promotes their merchandise on a decorative whiteboard with a pot of flowers in front. Displays of merchandise, artfully arranged, can really pull customers into a shop.

The bikes outside this shop (bottom left) are a great way to attract people into

the shop.

We went into this gallery (bottom right), which is great, and wondered why there weren’t more tables and chairs outside on the patio. Add more to make the entrance more welcoming.



Our "Very Best of Springfield" list is growing (top left). So far, it has a strong arts focus.

On a whole, the merchants do an excellent job with beautification. Even the grocery store/market looks terrific, and the hardware store is great (top right).

We didn't know what this building will be when it's done (bottom left). Build anticipation, and invite us back by posting a sign that says, "Coming Soon!" and letting us know what it will be.

Add a sign for this building, which is obviously under renovation, as well (bottom right). Let us know what is coming soon. Invite us back.



The gas station looks nice (top left), but it would look even better with pots every 3 feet along the store front, and with hanging baskets.

These shops are in a nice building (top right), but they look plain and boring. When shops are set back off the road behind a parking lot, they need to work harder to add curb appeal. There is nothing to entice customers into the shops. Add some hanging baskets, benches, and pots. Make it welcoming!

Remember, 70% of first-time sales comes from curb appeal.

Blondie's (bottom left) could use some more color with pots of flowers and outdoor dining with chairs and tables. When a restaurant is in an old house, they have to work harder to look like they are welcoming the public through their doors. More curb appeal!

This bulletin board (bottom right) is great for posting information for locals, but it is no substitute for visitor information.



We wanted to check out the Giant Screen movie theater, so we took the shuttle and walked towards the posters (top left). We didn't see a sign to the theater entrance. The doors were locked, and we didn't see a schedule, so we didn't know what movies were playing when.

We continued walking and came to the theater entrance. Suggestion: Add overhead signage (or a blade sign) to the entrance. Also, add information about the movies - the times each one is shown and how long they last. It wasn't clear.

We understand this panel (bottom right) will be used for park information. Suggestion: Add a visitor information kiosk nearby with brochure distribution for Springdale.



This building (top left and right) looks completely out of place here. This is right at the entrance to the park, and it is an eyesore. There are no “coming soon” signs, so we don’t know what is moving in, and right now there are just some hand-printed signs for paying for parking there. Suggestion: If retail or a restaurant will be going into this building, work with them on beautification.

Add curb appeal here (bottom left). When you’re off the road, with parking in from of the building, people may not even notice you unless you put extra effort into beautification. Planters, hanging baskets, flags, etc.

The Tribal Arts gallery (bottom right) is a great shop, but it looks pretty bare from the outside. Add more color with flowers, pots, hanging baskets, and add some large pieces of art outside to really pull customers into the store.



Most of the businesses do a fantastic job with beautification. The Cliffrose Lodge is stunning, and the Flying Monkey (top left) also looks great. We didn't have a chance to eat at all of your restaurants, unfortunately!

We understand the Switchback Grill is excellent, and this (top right) really sets the standard for architecture and curb appeal in the area.

The Lafave Gallery also really pulls customers in with its great curb appeal, and it's a great gallery.

Our "Very Best" list is getting longer (bottom left). And we didn't have a chance to go into every shop or eat in every restaurant while we were in Springdale, so our list is by no means final! We're sure there are many other businesses that are exceptional.

We weren't sure if the Bit & Spur (bottom right) was open for business because there was a sign for renovations out front and a man was sleeping on the bench by the door.



Suggestion: Remove the renovation sign from the Bit & Spur (top left). Make it obvious you're open for business.

We were going to see the Frontier Plunder Antiques shop (top right), but it was closed the first time we tried, and we couldn't read their sign telling us when they would be open (bottom left).

We did a lot of shopping in Springdale! The shops and front-line employees are great. For a town of 550 people, Springdale does an amazing job - better than many other destination towns!



This shop was also great (top left), and the outdoor displays were well done.

The Lazy Lizard Boutique (top right) did one of the best jobs we've ever seen with their outdoor displays. Talk about extending window displays to exterior spaces!

The Spotted Dog (bottom left) is great. It's kind of hard to read "Spotted Dog Cafe" on their sign, but it is easy to read "Restaurant" - and that's the most important thing to see. Suggestion: Repaint the words "Spotted Dog Cafe" in

yellow - it'll stand out against the green background.

We ate dinner at the Spotted Dog, and we noticed that most of the people were driving there. They didn't realize how easy it is to take the shuttle.

63 Create a zoning overlay downtown: no chains or franchise restaurants & retail shops. None.

Stick to your guns. Don't give in.

64 What's your brand?
Your unique selling proposition?

65 Make a list of these, put together a team and start working on turning some of these into action items.

What you have here is flat-out amazing

You are THE showcase destination town that others in the west should emulate.

Our most emphatic suggestion: Create a zoning overlay for downtown which prohibits chains or franchise restaurants and retail shops. The greatest charm and attraction of Springdale is how authentic it is to your roots. The local art, galleries, restaurants, and shops are what make you unique. Don't sell your soul.

We've seen many towns that have lost their charm and ambiance because they allowed chains and franchises to take over their downtowns. One example is Banff, Alberta. They allowed chains into downtown, and after so many chain

stores came, the rents became too high for local shops and restaurants to afford. So the local businesses had to close, and downtown Banff has become a big shopping center full of chain stores and franchises.

Just down the road from Banff, the town of Canmore has enacted a zoning overlay over their downtown core, not allowing franchises and chains. Their downtown, with its local shops, galleries, and restaurants, is a real pleasure to visit.



Springdale is an incredible destination town. What is Springdale's unique selling proposition? What sets Springdale apart from other towns? Of course, there's Zion National Park, but you don't want to be a "gateway" community. A gateway is someplace you pass through on your way to someplace else. And Springdale has much more than that.

From what we've seen, we believe that Springdale has a very strong arts focus. And the arts focus is local; it's organic. What you have here is amazing.

Make a list of these suggestions, put together a team, and start working on turning these suggestions into action items.



Springdale Marketing Assessment

The following pages contain an assessment by our secret shoppers, who researched the area from a distance, reviewing marketing materials to see if they could find the area, and if the materials were convincing enough to make them want to visit.

Website: www.zionpark.com

- We found this Zion Canyon Visitors Bureau website by looking through the Springdale town website and clicking on the link under “Events.” This is a good visitor website: attractive, well-organized, and with a good amount of information. However, it might be difficult for many visitors to find. We found it as a link from Springdale’s website, but most visitors to the region would probably search for Zion. This website shows up on the second page of search results, where it could easily be missed. It should show up on the first page of search results. Suggestion: Work on your Search Engine Optimization and look into “Pay per Click” to get on that first page of results.

- Good photography, and it’s easy to find information. Well organized.
- The links for shopping aren’t working, so check into that.
- Good descriptions for the restaurants and lodging facilities, as well as the activities and hikes. Great job with those. Just in case – be sure to include everyone, and not just members. (I think you are already doing this, but mentioned it just to be sure.)
- Add a section with itineraries. They should include one-day, two-day, and week-long itineraries, and they could be geared to different groups of people: families, couples, hikers, bikers, etc. The itineraries should be very detailed.

Website – www.springdaletown.com

- The tagline is “The Gateway to Zion National Park.” Although it might be quite true that the main draw for visitors is the national park, consider that a “gateway” is generally a place people pass through on their way somewhere else. Perhaps find another way to tout the proximity to the national park, while also showing that Springdale itself is a place worth visiting. Suggestion: “Springdale in Zion National Park”
- The overall design of the site is clean, evoking a nice outdoorsy feel.
- The site is not a dedicated visitor website, but includes information for current residents as well. Consider making the link to www.zionpark.com more prominent. It is a very good

visitor website and will allow you to target your information and messages toward potential visitors more easily.

- For example, to find information on area attractions, you have to first click on “About Springdale.” Potential visitors might not realize that is where to find the information they are looking for, and move onto the next potential destination.

- One of the important things a town’s website should do is communicate why the community is unique – answer the question, “Why should I make a special trip?” Although this website has a clean design and some nice photography, it doesn’t do much to showcase what Springdale has to offer.

- A good visitor website should include things like:

- o Itineraries – sample itineraries for several time frames and possibly different themes, such as families, couples, girl’s weekend, guy’s retreat, etc.

- o Seasonal information – what to do in different seasons of the year

- o Showcase the best of Springdale in order to differentiate it from other communities. What are the best attractions, the best restaurants, the best shops?

- o Include specifics. Days and hours of operation, directions, recommendations, etc. Give potential visitors what they need to plan their trip.

- o Lots of professional, high-quality photography. It’s clear Springdale has a lot of stunning natural beauty. Take advantage of that and utilize lots of great photos.

- o An emphasis on experiences. Scenery is nice, but people travel to experience things. Emphasize what people can do or experience, not just what they can see.

Website – www.visitstgeorge.com

- This website promotes Zion National Park and St. George, and provides some information about Springdale, such as lodging and restaurants. The information about Springdale is combined with that of St. George.

- We didn’t find a link to the Zion Canyon Visitors Bureau website, which would give more detailed information to visitors planning a trip specifically to Zion National Park and Springdale. Suggestion: Add a link to make it easier for visitors to find that specific information.

- The website is beautiful, with excellent photography. It has some good detailed information.

- The primary focus of the website is Zion National Park, the activities and beauty of the area. There’s not much information about the actual communities or what sets them apart and makes them unique. Suggestion: Provide more information about the towns themselves. What is Springdale like? What sets it apart from St. George? What is St. George like? Why would I want to spend time in either St. George or Springdale? The benefit of tourism is realized when visitors spend money, and they do that when they are in your towns: shopping, dining, being entertained. So while most visitors definitely come to the area for Zion National Park, while they are there, you also want to get them into your towns to spend money and help support your businesses.

Printed Materials

- First impression: it was a refreshing change to receive a manageable amount of materials in terms of quantity. Many communities mistake quantity for effectiveness. In this case, we received a magazine sized vacation planner booklet and a smaller brochure.

- However, the materials are not for Springdale specifically. There is some information about Springdale included in both pieces, but you wouldn’t know that from the covers.

- Springdale would benefit from its own set of print materials, including a “Best of Springdale” brochure and a “Hidden Gems” booklet, as described earlier in this report.

- When planning new print materials, keep in mind how today’s visitors typically use these materials. Most people do the majority of their travel planning online. This is where your website comes in. However, once people are at their destination, they like having a printed piece to help them navigate and plan, and to remind them of what the community has to offer.



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